UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/48/7/Add.11
23 June 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-eight session
Agenda item 123

PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995

Proposed reclassifications of posts

Twelfth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/48/75) on proposed reclassifications of posts. During the consideration of the report, the representatives of the Secretary-General provided additional information to the Advisory Committee.

2. The report of the Secretary-General was prepared in response to the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee (see A/48/7, para. 63) when it reviewed the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, 1/ namely, that any consideration of reclassifications should be deferred until they could be considered by the Advisory Committee on the basis of a resubmission from the Secretary-General that would contain adequate justification and would be the result of a completed internal review process. Accordingly, based on the results of the completed internal review process, the Secretary-General currently proposes the reclassifications of 42 posts, as follows:

(a) Upward reclassifications	(b) Downward reclassifications
2 D-1 to D-2	1 D-2 to D-1
4 P-5 to D-1	1 D-1 to P-5
5 P-4 to P-5	1 P-4 to P-3
5 P-3 to P-4	Total (b): 3
10 P-2 to P-3	
8 GS to P-2	
Total (a): 34	

As reflected in paragraphs 52 and 53 of the report, the Secretary-General proposes the reclassification of an additional five General Service posts (Other

level) to the Principal level. These proposed reclassifications were inadvertently omitted from the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

3. Upon inquiry, the Advisory Committee was also informed that the reclassification of five posts previously included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 was no longer included in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/48/75), since this reclassification was not supported by the internal review process.

4. In response to the Committee's question on the promotion of staff against posts that had not been approved by the General Assembly for reclassification, it was informed that the promotion of the following staff had been implemented: P-5 to D-1, Chief, Contribution Section, Department of Administration and Management, Office for Programme Planning, Budgeting and Finance; P-4 to P-5, Coordinator, Contractual Translation, Department of Administration and Management, Office of Conference Services; P-3 to P-4, Chief, General Accounts Unit, United Nations Office at Geneva; GS to P-2, Economist, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); GS to P-2, Librarian, ECLAC; GS to P-2, Public Information Officer, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); GS to P-2, Industrial Development Officer, ESCWA; GS to P-2, Printing Officer, ESCWA; and GS to P-2, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCWA. The Advisory Committee expects that this situation, which results in incumbency grading at a higher personal grade level than the level of the post and leads to serious anomalies, will not be allowed to recur.

5. The Advisory Committee was informed that the internal reclassification procedures were based on a common job classification system developed by the International Civil Service Commission. The job classification standards consist of three tiers. The master standard (Tier I), which employs a point-factor system, is the most general of the three tiers. Six factors are taken into account when grading a job: professional knowledge, difficulty of work, independence of work, work relationships, supervisory responsibilities and impact of work. Tier I also provides a framework for job design and human resource planning. The second group (Tier II) consists of separate descriptive standards for major occupations. These narrative standards, giving examples of typical duties at each level, assist in indicating how the master standard should be applied in making meaningful distinctions between levels of work within an organization and in assigning proper grade levels to similar functions across organizations. Tier II standards have been established for the following occupational groups: translators and revisers; personnel management specialists; economists; technical cooperation administrators; computer information specialists; purchasing and contracting specialists; auditors; civil engineers; public information specialists; financial management specialists; jurists; editors; and statisticians. The third group of standards (Tier III) is intended to cover jobs at a given grade level within one field of work in a single organization.

6. Justification of the proposed reclassifications is provided in paragraphs 4 to 54 of the report of the Secretary-General; paragraph 55 contains a breakdown by budget section of the estimated additional requirements of $1,507,900 (net)

relating to the proposed reclassifications, on the basis of standard costs for the full biennium 1994-1995.

7. In reviewing the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee recalled its observations and recommendations outlined in paragraphs 20 to 23 of its report (A/47/7/Add.9), when the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on procedures and norms for the creation, suppression, reclassification, conversion and redeployment of posts (A/C.5/47/4). At that time, the Committee indicated that it recognized that the report of the Secretary-General was a preliminary response to General Assembly resolution 46/185 B, section II, of 20 December 1991. The Committee also noted the constraints that existed in the establishment and application of uniform workload standards for determining the relative grading of functions within the Organization. The Advisory Committee had not objected, in principle, to the idea of the Secretary-General of integrating levels P-2 to P-4 for budgetary purposes, which could rationalize and expedite the consideration of staffing table proposals. However, subject to such decisions as the General Assembly might take in the context of its agenda on personnel questions, the Committee recommended that the integration, for budgetary purposes, be instituted in two parts, namely, levels P-1 and P-2, and P-3 and P-4.

8. In section I.E of its resolution 48/218 E of 23 December 1993, the General Assembly took note "of the note by the Secretary-General on procedures and norms for the creation, suppression, reclassification, conversion and redeployment of posts, regretted that the Secretary-General had not provided a report on those issues and requested that such a report be submitted, through the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. On the basis of its experience during the consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, the Advisory Committee recommends that the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General include his views on how the current procedures could be changed in order to achieve the following objectives: (a) granting to the Secretary-General the authority to reclassify posts up to the P-5 level, while ensuring that the relationship between the overall numbers for each grade level is maintained; (b) ensuring that the existing appropriations are not exceeded; and (c) ensuring that adequate control by the Secretariat and monitoring by the General Assembly are in place, including procedures for providing information to the Advisory Committee and the Assembly on action taken by the Secretary-General under his authority. Such a new system as might be proposed by the Secretary-General could, initially, be implemented for a trial period of two bienniums.

9. The Advisory Committee concurs in the proposed reclassifications during the biennium 1994-1995 of 5 General Service posts (Other level) to the Principal level, 8 General Service posts to the P-2 level, 10 P-2 posts to the P-3 level, 5 P-3 posts to the P-4 level and 1 P-4 post to the P-3 level.

10. With regard to the proposed reclassifications of posts at the P-4 level and above, the Advisory Committee has concurred in each of the Secretary-General's requests; its specific observations and recommendations are given in the paragraphs below.

11. The Advisory Committee recommends that the additional requirements relating to the recommended reclassifications be met from within existing regular budget resources. Any additional requirements should be reported in the second performance report for the biennium 1994-1995.

(a) Section 1: D-1 to P-5, Executive Secretary, Board of Auditors

12. As stated in paragraph 4 of the report, the level and functions of the post at the time of the classification review were found to meet the criteria for classification at the P-5 level. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that, at the proposal of the Secretary-General, contained in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1986-1987, 2/ the General Assembly classified the post of the Executive Secretary of the Board of Auditors at the D-1 level; the Secretary-General's proposal was based on the result of a completed internal review process in the course of which the post was classified at the D-1 level by the Classification Section. The Advisory Committee regrets that no substantive justification was included in the report of the Secretary-General regarding the proposed reclassification of the post of the Executive Secretary of the Board of Auditors at the P-5 level. The Committee was subsequently informed that the reclassification of the post at the D-1 level was attributable to a particular qualification of the then incumbent of the post, who had since then retired. In this connection the Advisory Committee reiterates its view that reclassifications should be proposed and considered only in relation to the post itself, without regard to a particular incumbent.

13. At this point, the Advisory Committee concurs in the proposal of the Secretary-General. The Committee believes, however, that the level of this post should be reviewed by the Secretary-General in the context of review of the role and responsibilities of the Board of Auditors.

(b) Section 3: D-1 to D-2, Director, Centre for Disarmament Affairs

14. Justification for the proposed reclassification of the post of the Director of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs from D-1 to the D-2 level is contained in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Secretary-General's report. In paragraph 6 the Secretary-General states, inter alia, that the same functions previously carried out by the Under-Secretary-General are mutatis mutandis performed by the Director of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs. The Committee was informed that the functions of the post had not been previously classified and that the classification action had been prompted by the restructuring of the Secretariat. The Advisory Committee concurs in the proposal of the Secretary-General.

(c) Section 3D: D-1 to D-2, Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs

15. Justification for the proposed reclassification of the post of the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs from D-1 to the D-2 level is contained in

paragraph 3D.3 (a) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 and in paragraphs 7 to 9 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/48/75). The Committee was informed that the post was internally classified at the D-1 level in April 1985 and that the current classification action was related to the expansion in the scope and complexity of the work programme as a result of organizational restructuring, including the relocation of the Office to Vienna, additional responsibilities for legal issues, follow-up work related to the International Space Year and the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Committee concurs in the proposal of the Secretary-General.

(d) Section 7: P-4 to P-5, Executive Officer, Office of Legal Affairs

16. As outlined in paragraph 15 of the report of the Secretary-General, the responsibilities of this post have increased as a result of the restructuring exercise in 1992, which resulted in the former Office for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, including its Kingston Office, being brought into Office of Legal Affairs. In addition, the Office has taken on administrative responsibilities for various commissions and bodies established by recent Security Council resolutions, such as the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission, the Commission of Experts established pursuant to Security Council resolution 780 (1992) and the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. The Committee concurs in the proposal of the Secretary-General. At the same time, the Committee recommends that the level of the post of the Executive Officer be reviewed in the light of developments in the responsibility of the Executive Office vis-á-vis the above commissions, the International Tribunal and the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

17. The Secretary-General also proposes the downgrading in the Office of Legal Affairs of a P-4 post of administrative officer to the P-3 level. The Advisory Committee regrets that no information was provided in support of the proposed downward reclassification. The Committee expects to receive in the future the same justification for the proposed downward reclassifications as for upward reclassifications. The Committee concurs in the proposal of the Secretary-General.

(e) Section 9: P-5 to D-1, Chief, Environment and Energy Statistics Branch, Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis

18. Justification for the proposed reclassification of the post of Chief of Environment and Energy Statistics of the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis from P-5 to the D-1 level is contained in paragraphs 17 and 18 of the report of the Secretary-General. The Committee was informed that the functions of the post had not previously been classified and that the classification action had been initiated as a result of the creation in 1991 of an Environment and Energy Statistics Branch. The Branch was established

in recognition of the rapidly increasing demand for environment statistics and in anticipation of further demands for environmental data and a database for policy analysis as a result of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Advisory Committee concurs in the proposal of the Secretary-General.

(f) Section 16: P-4 to P-5, Chief, Statistical Development Section, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

19. Justification for the proposed reclassification of the post of Chief of the Statistical Development Section from P-4 to P-5 is provided in paragraphs 21 and 22 of the report of the Secretary-General. The Committee was informed that the post had been classified internally at the P-5 level in 1983. Following the 1989 abolition of the D-1 post of Chief, Statistics Division, ESCAP, in the post reduction exercise, a revised description of that post had been submitted for classification at the P-4 level, together with a revised description of the post of Chief of the Division for classification at the P-5 level. Following review, ESCAP was informed that both posts still met the criteria for classification at the P-5 and D-1 levels and was requested to redesign the posts to permit their reclassification to lower levels. ESCAP submitted revised job descriptions for both posts, indicating that major changes in the duties and responsibilities of the posts could not be made without complete distortion of the organizational setting. As review and adjustment of the organizational structure would be required, it was decided to reclassify the posts to the P-5 and P-4 levels on a provisional basis to permit recruitment action pending completion of the organizational review. The Committee notes in this connection that the proposal to redeploy a D-1 post from the Technical Cooperation Division to head the Statistics Division was approved in the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. The Advisory Committee was also informed that the current classification action of the post of Chief, Statistical Development Section from P-4 to P-5 was initiated on the basis of an expansion of the statistical programme to cover such new areas as sustainable development, poverty alleviation and quality-of-life indicators, as well as a result of the inclusion of 11 new members and associate members in the Commission. The Advisory Committee concurs in the proposal of the Secretary-General.

(g) Section 19: P-4 to P-5, Senior Statistician, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

20. Explanation in support of the proposed reclassification is contained in paragraph 31 of the report. The Advisory Committee was informed that the post had been classified internally at the P-5 level and that the current proposal for reclassification was due to an expansion of the work programme under the newly established Statistical Committee. The Advisory Committee concurs in the proposal of the Secretary-General.

(h) Section 24: D-2 to D-1, Department of Public Information

21. The proposal to reclassify a D-2 post to the D-1 level is based on the restructuring of the Department of Public Information. The classification of the post at the D-1 level reflects the duties of the post of Deputy Spokesperson. The Committee concurs in the proposal.

(i) Section 25B: P-5 to D-1, Chief, Contributions Section/Secretary of the Committee on Contributions, Office for Programme Planning, Budget and Finance

22. Justification for the proposed reclassification is provided in paragraphs 33 to 35 of the report of the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee was also informed that the post had been classified internally at the P-5 level, under the United Nations classification standard, prior to the introduction of the International Civil Service Commission master standard and that, subsequently, the post had been informally evaluated at the P-5 level in 1989, under the ICSC master standard, at the request of the Office. Furthermore, the Committee was informed that the current classification action was prompted by the fact that the level of responsibilities of the post as Secretary of the Committee on Contributions had increased substantially and, with the increase in the number of peace-keeping operations, the responsibilities of the post as Chief of the Contributions Section had also expanded considerably. The Committee concurs in the proposal.

(j) Section 25C: P-5 to D-1, Chief, Professional Staffing Service, Office of Human Resources Management

23. Paragraphs 38 and 39 of the report provide justification for the proposed reclassification of the post of the Chief of the Professional Staffing Service from P-5 to the D-1 level. The Advisory Committee was informed that this post was classified internally at the D-1 level in 1981 under the title of Chief, Professional Recruitment Service, and that the incumbent of the post was responsible for the supervision of 16 Professional and 30 General Service posts. The Committee concurs in the proposal.

(k) Section 25E: P-5 to D-1, Head, Verbatim Reporting Section, Office of Conference Services

24. Justification for the proposed reclassification is provided in paragraph 40 of the report of the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee was informed that the post had been classified internally in 1984 at the D-1 level and that the current classification action had been initiated in recognition of the responsibilities of the post for the supervision of 54 Professional staff in the six language units and 5 General Service staff in a recording unit and taking into account a sharp increase in the number of staff supervised during the sessions of the General Assembly. The Committee concurs in the proposal.

(l) Section 25E: P-4 to P-5, Coordinator, Contractual Translation Unit, Office of Conference Services

25. The proposed reclassification is explained in paragraph 42 of the report. The Advisory Committee was informed that the post had been classified internally at the P-5 level in 1992 and that the current classification action had been initiated in view of the managerial responsibilities of the post, which had grown with the increasing use of contractual services, involving an annual average of some 45,000 pages and an annual budget in excess of $1 million. The Committee concurs in the proposal.

(m) Income section 3, P-4 to P-5, Head, European Office (Vienna), United Nations Postal Administration

26. Paragraphs 46 and 47 of the report of the Secretary-General provide justification for the proposed reclassification of a P-4 post of the Head of the European Office of the United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) to the P-5 level. The Advisory Committee was informed that this post had not been classified internally and that originally the Vienna Office had been under the functional supervision by the Geneva Office, which played a coordinating role for the marketing programme for both the European branches of UNPA. In the retrenchment exercise, however, the Geneva post had been downgraded to the P-4 level, and its supervisory and coordinating responsibilities over the Vienna Office were removed. The Committee concurs in the proposal.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/48/6/Rev.1).

2/ Ibid., Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/40/6).